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LETTER DATED 10 AUGUST 1993 FROM THE CHARGE D'AFFAIRES A.I.
OF THE PERMANENT MISSION OF CROATIA TO THE UNITED NATIONS
ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

I have the honour to submit, enclosed herewith, a letter by the Prime Minister of the Republic of Croatia Mr. Nikica Valentic, addressed to you.

I would be grateful if you would provide for the distribution of this letter and its annex as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Vladimir DROBNJAK
Chargé d'affaires a.i.

Annex

Letter dated 10 August 1993 from the Prime Minister of Croatia addressed to the Secretary-General

I am writing in connection with the latest extremely serious situation caused by the bombardment of the site of the newly installed pontoon bridge over the Maslenica straits. As you are probably well aware, the bridge was opened for traffic on 18 July and subsequently damaged by Serb artillery on 1 August of this year. The location was shelled afterwards, with the latest attack taking place on 9 August.

It is a legitimate right of the Republic of Croatia to install the bridge for civilian, humanitarian and commercial traffic - this right was confirmed by United Nations Security Council resolution 847 (1993). The opening of the bridge was necessitated by, among other reasons, the suspension of traffic over the damaged Pag bridge, the only remaining land transportation route in the region.

In addition to the attacks on the Maslenica bridge, Serb rebels have used their strongholds in the UNPAs to launch artillery and rocket attacks on a series of towns and villages throughout the Republic of Croatia, with the obvious intention of provoking a new war. They have even flown warplanes and helicopters over the territory of the Republic of Croatia in the Zupanja area. At the same time, they continue to totally reject and violate all pertinent decisions of the international community, notably the relevant United Nations Security Council resolutions.

We consider the implementation of relevant Security Council resolutions to be the principal task of all parties concerned, primarily the United Nations and their forces in Croatia, whose very presence and operations in the Republic of Croatia are based on these international instruments. Under these circumstances, in which there is no clearly defined powers to act within an efficient mandate, UNPROFOR has not made any progress in implementing the decisions of the international community, even failing to stop the Serb attacks from the UNPAs, in which ethnic cleansing, persecutions and killings of the non-Serb population continue.

The Republic of Croatia has always been genuinely cooperative and shown maximum patience in seeking a negotiated settlement in compliance with the existing international decisions. However, it must be noted that such a situation cannot be tolerated indefinitely.

Considering the recent dangerous developments, the Republic of Croatia requests that strong pressure be applied on the Serbian authorities in Knin to stop the shelling of the Maslenica area and allow for the repair of the bridge in the next few days. To this end, all necessary preparations have already been made. We request the UNPROFOR to deploy its forces in the area of the Maslenica bridge, including the bridge itself, and at Zemunik airport. Technical assistance in the renewal of the bridge would be appreciated. In view of the imminent suspension of any freight traffic over the Pag bridge, the Maslenica bridge remains the only land link to southern Croatia for truck traffic,

including humanitarian convoys bringing assistance to displaced persons and refugees. The same route is also needed for the transit of substantial humanitarian supplies to the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Considering the present needs of the civilian population which exist there, and the fact that winter is approaching, severe consequences may result if the bridge is not reopened.

Expecting your full understanding, support and assistance in these extremely important matters, I assure you of my highest consideration.

(Signed) Nikica VALENTIC
Prime Minister